

MODERN Imperialism

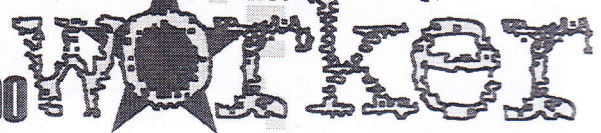
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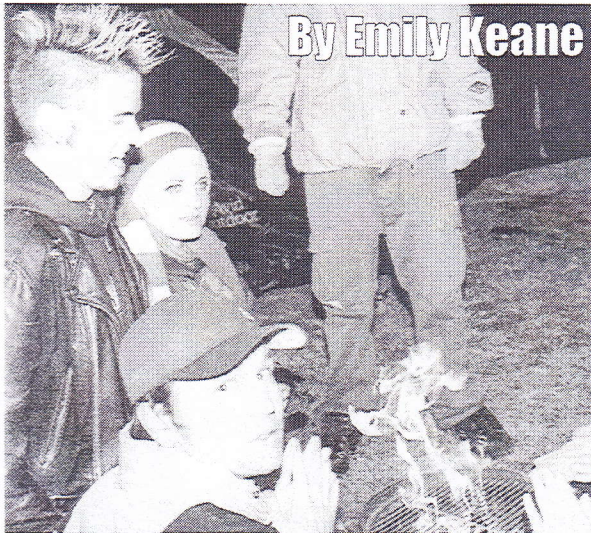
ISSUE 4: DEC 2000



THE SHANTYTOWN

STUDENT WORKER CAMPS OUT ON BOULDER HIGH'S LAWN

PHOTOS BY TESS McDANIEL



By Emily Keane

THE SHANTY

TOWN'S MISSION:

Student Worker will unite youth and Boulder's homeless community by raising awareness about poverty and hunger in Boulder and around the world. This Shantytown will creatively address issues of global injustice, overconsumption, and the wealth gap.

Built after school on Friday, December 1, the Shantytown on Boulder High's front lawn was designed to draw attention to what goes on in Boulder behind the golf courses, housing developments, and four-runners. With around 1,000 homeless people in Boulder County, it is vital that we as a community face and deal with the issue of poverty, instead of pretending it's not there. Although the night was bitterly cold, many showed up to demonstrate their support for the group and the cause.

"I think it went well, but it was too cold for anyone to come," said Laine Rettmer, a New Vista student. "It gave us an idea of what the homeless actually have to suffer through."

Students from Boulder High, September School, New Vista, and Fairview populated the make-shift Shantytown. Even some people walking out of the BHS talent show, Cabaret, joined in the merry-making.

The evening reached a high point when Clandestine, a band of students from New Vista, played a short show. It seemed, however, that the music wasn't appreciated by some parents who were walking past, for they covered their ears. Oh well, if they don't like revolutionary punk music, too bad for them. In addition to the organized music, singing could be heard from the make-shift camp-fire, actually a small barbecue stove.

Also performing were the Radical Cheerleaders. Although this group practices weekly and some have attended numerous protests and performances, the Shantytown was the place where many saw them for the first time. Performing cheers such as "Abercrombie and Fitch," "Ugly," and "Consumption," all about issues of corporate power and globalization, the cheerleaders were a source of entertainment and laughter.

The Shantytown was an over-all success. Student Worker and the Radical Cheerleaders even got some TV coverage, as well as an article in the Daily Camera and a segment on KGNU. The clothing drive went very well, with several car-loads of food and clothes going to the Boulder Shelter for the Homeless.

Student Worker also gratefully accepted donations from local businesses such as Café Solé and Laudisio's. Free food and hot coffee were available throughout the night and the left-overs went to the free lunch program at the First Presbyterian Church. Thanks to those committed enough to stay through the night, the vigil against homelessness and poverty brought some out of their homes, and some off the streets.



STUDENT WORKER



STUDENT WORKER is a group of open-minded youth resisting the dominant and dominating culture who are actively committed to bringing awareness and an alternative perspective to the issues and events that affect our collective future.

www.studentworker.org

LAYOUT

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Institutionalizing Imperialism

By Devin W.K.

The Old World

In 1492 Christopher Columbus arrived on the shores of the Bahamas, where he was greeted warmly by the indigenous Arawaks, who offered him such modest gifts as their pre-industrial society could. After noting in his journal the benevolence and innocence of the natives, Columbus laconically observes, "They would make fine servants... With fifty men we could subjugate them all and make them do whatever we want."

In this single incident was contained the seed of contemporary America, soon to be watered by the blood and tears of many millions now forgotten. Swiftly following this first historic meeting of civilizations, waves of European *conquistadors* proceeded to mercilessly decimate the local populations of the New World. The executioners advanced that multi-century genocide happy and secure in the

assumption that their monopoly on vicious, sophisticated warfare guaranteed them the moral right to use it against any and all "fierce savages," easily distinguishable at the time by virtue of their non-white skin. Even before the slaughter of the indigenous civilizations was fully carried out, Europeans were importing other non-white peoples to partake in the glorious New World by constructing it under the familiar guidance of whip, gun, and Bible.

Three centuries of Progress after the first slave ships touched American shores, British statesman Lloyd George noted cheerfully that "we insisted on reserving the right to bomb niggers" during European negotiations to establish humanitarian laws of war. Shortly thereafter, bombs began to fall on Great Britain herself in the second immense, internecine battle between the post-colonial global elites.

The New World

The last five decades, then, have continued to follow the same pattern of imperialist domination, accompanied by a good degree of hostility between the US and our weaker global competitor, the USSR. Following the ultimate collapse of that regime, the US is now free to enforce its hegemony unperturbed. In this "New World Order," as George Bush described it, the US is to set all the rules, which will apply to us only when convenient. The function of the military in this system is to enforce these rules when coercion and/or economic warfare fail, as we have seen amply demonstrated in Kosovo, Iraq, and Central America during the past two decades.

A good indication of Washington's position of absolute supremacy is that all military interventions the US has initiated in the past half-century were in violation of international law, and by extension our own Constitution, which states that "all treaties made... under the authority of the United States shall be the supreme law of the land." The relevant treaty in this case is the Charter of the United Nations, which forbids all acts of state aggression excepting self-defense. The US has enthusiastically enforced this nonviolent policy against others throughout its fifty-year reign, even extending the doctrine to include acts of self-defense by our enemies as "aggression" or "terrorism." We of course remain exempt from our own standards. Censures of US military actions proposed in the UN are invariably killed by Washington's Security Council veto (usually with token British support), so we can effectively use our legal authority to eliminate any criticism of our illegal use of force. Despite the enormous power of this veto and regardless of the fact that we ratified (and largely created) the UN Charter, the United Nations has proved too egalitarian a global government for the US, which is partly why the World Trade Organization was established in 1995. International trade law had previously been in the hands of the UN Commission on

Trade and Development, which had supported a trade regime compatible with unprofitable standards such as human rights, broader distribution of wealth, and preferential accommodations for the Third World. None of that went over well with Washington, which chose to institute its vision of "free trade" through the quasi-governmental IMF and World Bank, now reinforced by the WTO.

The establishment of the current international trade system is primarily a way of institutionalizing—and thus legitimizing—the same imperialist economic regime of resource extraction and labor exploitation practiced for centuries under colonialism.

US corporations have achieved their current dominance through the same economic protectionist measures—subsidizing exports, taxing imports, and generally favoring domestic over foreign industry—that they now deride. Honorable calls from industry to "level the playing field" are quite predictable when the transnational corporate conglomerates are bigger than the entire economies of the countries they propose to "compete" with. The winners of this competition have never been in doubt. Even so, "market discipline"—i.e. the right to starve and die if you're not on the top rungs of the ladder—is to apply only to other countries, and, of course, the First World poor, who were never meant to share in the infinite wealth "created" by capitalism. Accordingly, the US bleeds its social services into nonexistence and continues its multibillion-dollar subsidies to the agricultural, communications, financial, and high-tech industries even while "free trade" agreements eliminate price supports (mainly agricultural) in the Third World. The effects on the global economy are as expected: all nations become resource and labor pools for a rapidly decreasing number of business conglomerates, which "competitively" merge and collaborate to maintain their absolute control of the market.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SEATTLE INDEPENDENT MEDIA CENTER (RICI) AND TANYA CARRELLA (ALLEYWAY AND CELEBRATING PROTESTERS)

1 YEAR AFTER

the BATTLE in SEATTLE

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST
CORPORATE POWER RAGES ON
By Angela Hadley, Devin W.K.,
Tess McDaniel, and Tim Simons

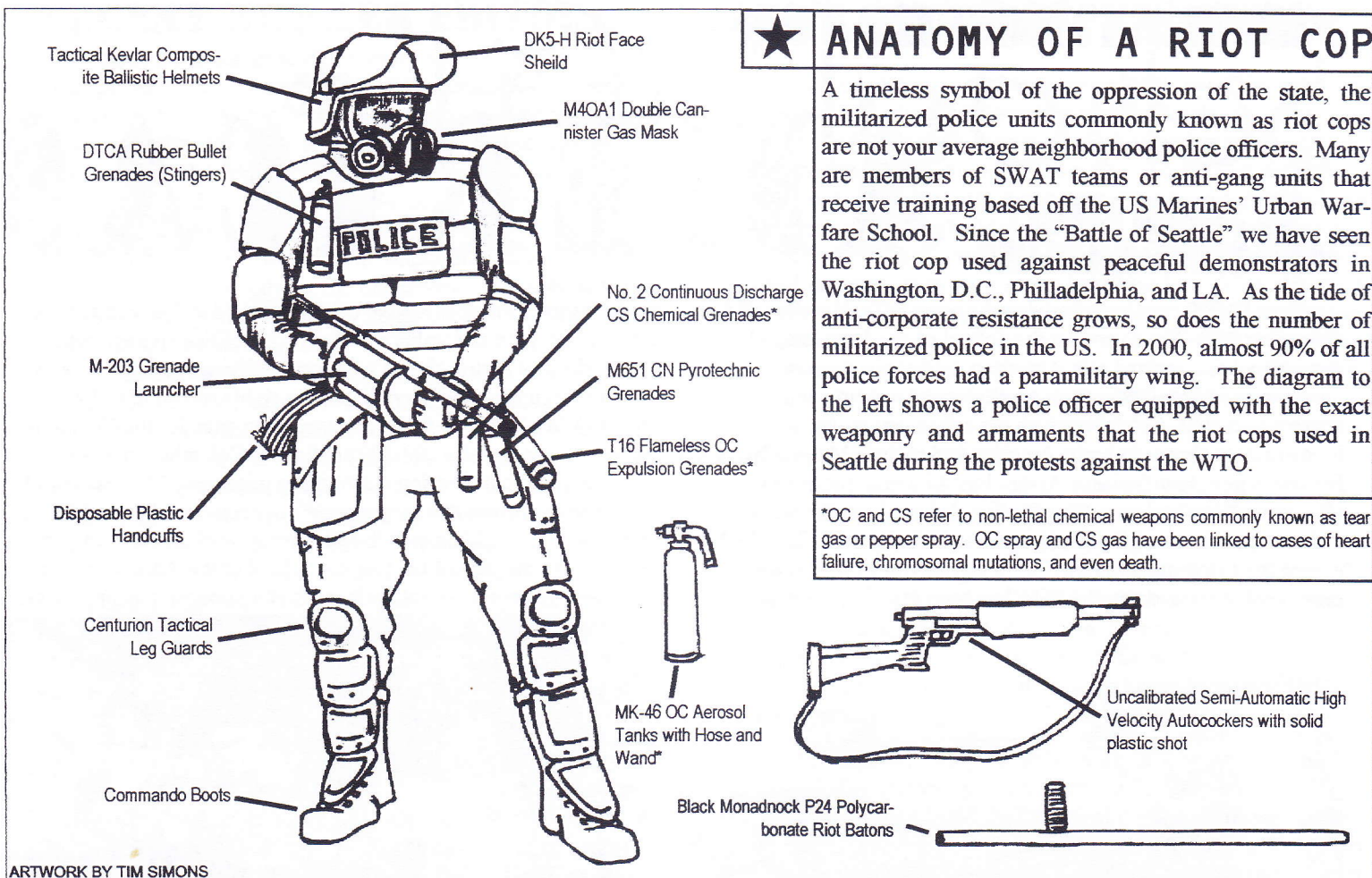
140 ARRESTED IN N30 ANNIVERSARY PROTEST

November 30, 2000 was the one-year anniversary of what political activists refer to as N30, the mass street protests against the World Trade Organization's Third Ministerial Meeting in Seattle, Washington. This year, police requested a mere \$370,000 to "protect the city" from the follow-up protest (compared to the \$9.3 million spent during the protests in 1999). During the anniversary protests, 140 peaceful activists were surrounded by Seattle police officers and systematically arrested. These events bore a striking resemblance to the mass arrests that filled Seattle prisons in November and December of 1999. ★

what's wrong with the

WTO?

The World Trade Organization is the most powerful institution in the world and the only international governmental body with the authority to overturn national laws. Created in 1995 after secret negotiations between government trade representatives and corporate interest groups such as the TransAtlantic Business Dialogue, the WTO was formed on the belief that international commercial transactions are more important than all other concerns. Member countries can challenge each other's laws as "non-tariff trade barriers" and have their cases judged by anonymous trade ministers (some of them previously business executives) with no public input or oversight. In its brief existence, the WTO has ruled against laws protecting the environment, consumer health, public safety, human rights, small business, and cultural diversity. In addition to actually overturning such laws, member countries are discouraged from even passing new public interest legislation since such laws may be WTO-illegal. Another purpose of the WTO is to "harmonize" all nations' public interest standards to the lowest common denominator, although WTO laws vigorously protect intellectual property rights, allowing global pharmaceutical corporations to charge exorbitant prices on life-saving drugs. The WTO's rules also forbid considering human rights factors in global trade, forcing members to import goods from, for example, Burma, where the totalitarian government forces its citizens into slavery. Though labor laws have yet to be challenged under the WTO, rights such as minimum wages, unionization, and bans on child labor could be ruled trade violations. Most importantly, the WTO has been horrible for the Third World, where its agricultural agreement has put millions out of farming jobs, its intellectual property rights agreement has allowed corporations to patent seeds and medicines developed over generations by poor societies, and its elimination of government subsidies and other protections has resulted in Third World trade losses of hundreds of billions of dollars. Of all the people affected by the WTO around the world, probably the only ones better off now than they were before its establishment are the corporate executives who pushed to create it. ★



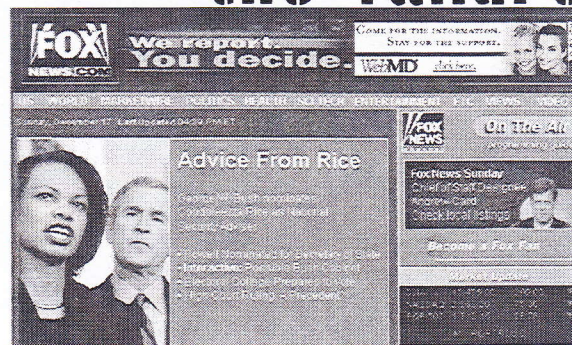
★ ANATOMY OF A RIOT COP

A timeless symbol of the oppression of the state, the militarized police units commonly known as riot cops are not your average neighborhood police officers. Many are members of SWAT teams or anti-gang units that receive training based off the US Marines' Urban Warfare School. Since the "Battle of Seattle" we have seen the riot cop used against peaceful demonstrators in Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, and L.A. As the tide of anti-corporate resistance grows, so does the number of militarized police in the US. In 2000, almost 90% of all police forces had a paramilitary wing. The diagram to the left shows a police officer equipped with the exact weaponry and armaments that the riot cops used in Seattle during the protests against the WTO.

*OC and CS refer to non-lethal chemical weapons commonly known as tear gas or pepper spray. OC spray and CS gas have been linked to cases of heart failure, chromosomal mutations, and even death.

the failure of corporate media

AND THE RISE OF INDY MEDIA



Almost all news that reaches the US citizen is produced by large, for-profit media corporations. These firms are growing larger and fewer in number as rivals merge. This system works to advance the cause of the global market and promote commercial values. The voices of the new activists, which are occasionally directed at the media monopoly, are unsurprisingly ignored. The WTO protest in Seattle last November was covered largely due to the violence. The issues the activists raised were left ignored, overshadowed by the "violent anti-WTO street protesters" dubbed by one Seattle area newspaper as "pedophiles" and "nostalgic aging hippies looking for their last protest." The mass mobilizations in D.C., Philly, LA, and Georgia that followed were completely unheard by the media.

- Nine corporations own and dominate media around the world: AOL Time Warner, Disney, Viacom, Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, Sony, TCI, Universal, and NBC.

The growing voice of independent media cannot be ignored in a time when we experience the effects of corporate power in every aspect of our lives and our democracy, leaving the average citizen with a biased and undemocratic voice. Independent media comes from the grassroots level, which cuts out the massive profit underbelly, the panels of CEOs and executives, and the grinning robotic newscasters. Independent media is sometimes called citizen media because of its openness to the public and democratic, open source style journalism.

- Independent Media Centers (IMCs) are appearing all over the world. 39 of these centers exist in 39 cities around the world.
- At the recent mass mobilizations, the IMCs disseminated reports from hundreds of media activists about the reality of what occurred in the streets. The Indy Media web site received thousands of hits each day during these mass mobilizations.

PROTESTING THE *School of the Americas* AMERICAS

BY SARAH KINNEY
AND CHRIS RIEDERER

Over 10,000 people gathered at the gates of Ft. Benning, GA on November 20th-21st to protest the School of the Americas, a US military school that trains Latin American soldiers in counter-insurgency, torture techniques, psychological warfare, combat, and counter-narcotics. Graduates from the school are guilty of the worst human rights abuses in Latin America and include Manuel Noriega, Roberto Viola, Juan Velasco Alvarado, and Guillermo Rodriguez. US corporations and government officials have been the school's main supporters since it was set up in 1946 in Panama. The SOA moved to Ft Benning, GA in 1984. The nonviolent civil disobedience movement to close down the SOA has been growing since the first

the Pentagon continues to give US military aid to Colombia. In August, the US gave Colombia's military \$1.3 billion to help fight the war on drugs. Clinton signed a waiver justifying national security as reason for ignoring the horrible human rights record of Colombia. The SOA has been one of the main training sites for the Colombian military; there are also 200-300 soldiers in Colombia on a typical day, many of them carrying out training missions. "The School of the Americas is part of a larger project to protect and defend US corporate interests in Mexico at the expense of workers and indigenous peoples. The movement to close the School of the Americas is an important expression of solidarity with the Mexican people," notes



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SARAH KINNEY

**ACTIVIST MARCH IN THE RAIN (LEFT)
AND PERFORM A DIE-IN (RIGHT)**

protest in 1990, an effort started by Carol Richardson and Friar Roy Bourgeois. The SOA is part of a much bigger system of corporate greed (a.k.a. US foreign policy), and this movement is part of a growing revolution against corporate-fueled oppression. Countries with the worst history of human rights abuses have consistently sent the most students to the SOA in times of weak military control or suppression. The growing number of SOA graduates from Mexico corresponds to the growing movement for economic justice in Mexico. Defenders of the poor—for example, Bishop Ruiz—threaten the ruling PRI party, armed and trained by the federal Army, who in turn were trained by the SOA. Colombia has more SOA grads than any other Latin American country. SOA grads were connected with the 1998 massacre in Segovia, the Trujillo chainsaw massacre, and the 1993 Rifio massacre. In the name of fighting a "war on drugs,"



Eduardo Diaz, a Mexican labor leader.

The November protest brought over 10,000 veterans, students, nuns, Grandmothers for Peace, and human rights activists together for the common goal of closing the SOA. 4,408 people crossed the line on to the military base carrying crosses and Stars of David bearing the names of those killed by SOA trainees. Most of the crosses were planted by the roadside on the base in remembrance of the victims. Many planted corn on Ft. Benning soil to literally plant the seeds of hope and change. 1,200 people were processed by the Military Police (MP) for crossing their line. 65 of these people were arrested and 23 face prison. The first to cross the line on to the base was an affinity group carrying a coffin and wearing death shrouds. Once on the base they enacted a die-in and most were dragged off the base by MPs. Following the funeral was a long memorial procession consisting of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

STUDENT WORKER EDITORIAL: WHO'S AFRAID OF FREE SPEECH?

In October, a group of students from Boulder's three public high schools gathered for a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) meeting in a classroom at New Vista High School to strategize. The school district operates on a "limited open forum" policy for student clubs. This means that any club that is not directly related to the curriculum cannot be affiliated with a school. So far every high school in the district has excluded GSA's, except New Vista, where a class on "Gays and Lesbians in Society and Literature" ties the issues addressed in the club directly to the classroom. Students at the New Vista GSA meeting were not happy about the district policy and they are taking it to the school board.

The "limited open forum" policy can be traced to a 1984 federal Equal Access Act that gives all non-curricular, student initiated clubs equal rights to organize in public high schools. This means that Bible Study groups to the Young Socialists of America can meet on campus after school hours. There is a catch: A school or district can prohibit all non-curricular clubs, as BVSD has done, to get around this law. In Boulder, the Radical Cheerleaders were banned from New Vista after performing a cheer called "Resist" in front of the entire school. This cheer includes lines like, "fight the capitalist." The administration said that while the Radical Cheerleaders are a branch of Student Worker, which does have club status, the group does not provide a balanced perspective on the issues it addresses, another requirement of school affiliated groups.

District and school officials explain that the "limited open forum" policy is in place to ensure that groups like the Ku Klux Klan or religious fundamentalists cannot set up shop within public schools. However, as the school board gears up to address the absence of GSA's in our schools—groups that have been proven to be forces for tolerance and community building across the country—the policy will have to be reevaluated. Students plan to testify before the School Board and negotiate with their own administrations. They will point out that while the district may be trying to protect us from hate groups and uphold the separation of church and state, the First Amendment is too important a principle to limit in this way. Free speech must be the measure of success for making this kind of school policy.

When the American Civil Liberties Union defends the rights of the KKK to march nonviolently, we should respond by teaching the history of that group and its roots in hate and violence. We should not oppose their right to assemble. Freedom of speech should be treated no differently in our schools. All student groups should have the right to exist and the right to equal access to school resources. To complement this, teachers and administrators should make a commitment to a curriculum that will encourage students to embrace citizenship. Protecting students' rights to assemble and speak their minds must be a priority if schools are to be a real introduction to living in our democracy. ★

SOA CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6 the rest of the vigilant protesters, who maintained a focus of solemn remembrance for the victims of the SOA. Both on and off the base, protesters read the list of victims from the El Mazote massacre. After each name, the masses responded with shouts of "PRESENTE!" Puppetistas, including Mad River Puppets, Boulder's Radical Cheerleaders, Black Blocs, and the Eggplant Fairies, constructed huge puppets of soldiers and political figures, which were used in a "puppet show" on the base. In the parades going on to the base they chanted "Puppets are stronger than guns, oh my!" Among the speakers at the protest were first-hand witnesses of the impacts of the SOA. They told stories of family members who were "disappeared" and whole villages that were destroyed by the soldiers of dictatorships which are essentially puppets of the US. The musical performers on Sunday were Pete Seeger, his grandson Charlie, Tao Rodriguez, Charlie King, and a pan-pipe band from Central America.

In May of 2000 the House of Representatives approved the closing

and simultaneous reopening of the SOA under a new name. The change is merely cosmetic and represents no actual shift in policy or intent. On January 17, 2001 the School of the Americas will close and reopen as the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation. The government continues to ignore the growing public outcry and congressional concern over the SOA's involvement with the humans rights abusers in Latin America. If you are outraged that your tax dollars are going to support a school that is responsible for the deaths of thousands of Latin Americans in the name of corporate greed, TAKE ACTION!

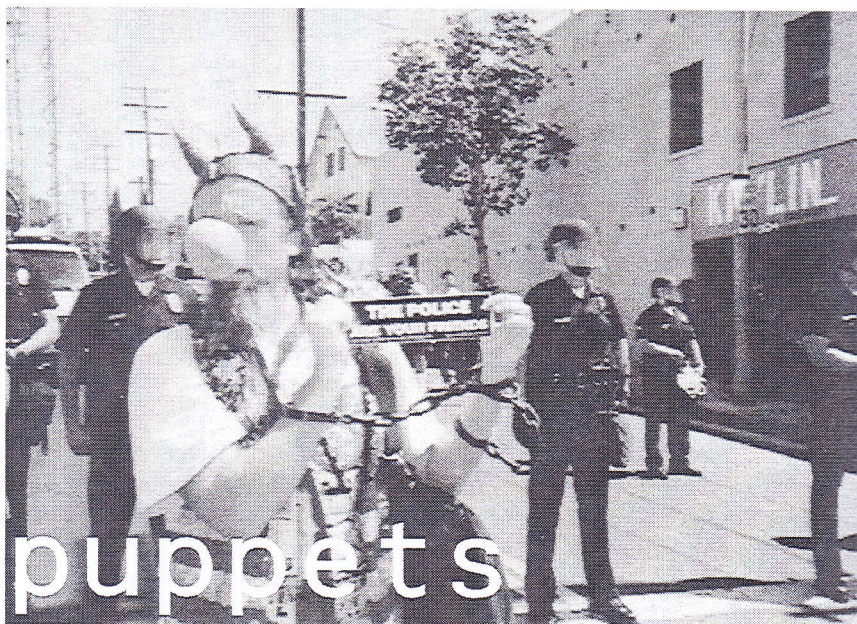
- Call the new administration and new Congress and urge them to support all efforts to shut down the SOA/WHISC
- White House:202-456-1414
- Capitol switchboard:202-224-3121
- Encourage your PBS station to air *Father Roy: inside the School of Assassins*, a documentary on the SOA ★

IMPERIALISM CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Continuity & Change

A necessary adjunct to the New World Order is the distortion and erasure of history, since a thorough understanding of the past would expose the present as what it is, an extension of the Old World Order. The system has been incredibly successful in eliminating historical memory, with a pantheon of genocidal conquerors elevated to the status of national heroes, unpleasant or inconvenient events completely forgotten, and the general replacement of imperialist subjugation with noble motives and American dreams. This makes it all the easier for the corporate media to pass off international atrocities like the Gulf War or the bombing of Kosovo as honorable efforts by our leaders to preserve global peace, or to describe the "inevitable" process of globalization as an unprecedented historical development which will somehow pull the poor out of their despondency through skyrocketing corporate profits. And while the pundits glorify our compassionate wars and free markets, the New World conquistadors continue the work begun over 500 years ago.

On a global scale, history has passed with remarkable continuity for the past half-millennium. The most significant change may have been that the "fierce savages" remaining to be subjugated can no longer be identified simply by skin color. ★



puppets of revolution

A PHOTO ESSAY OF PROTEST
PUPPETS BY TANYA CARDELLA

A CHANGE IN CHIAPAS?

MEXICAN FEDERAL TROOPS WITHDRAW FROM ZAPATISTA TERRITORY
BY CHRIS MAYNARD

Since its creation in 1994, the EZLN (Zapatista Army of National Liberation) has been struggling and fighting for indigenous rights in Chiapas, Mexico. Since then, hundreds upon thousands of Mexican military troops have been stationed in Chiapas to restrain the Zapatistas and their way of life. Over the past seven years, the Zapatistas have demanded that the Mexican government withdraw troops from the area and implement an Indian rights measure before they will begin cooperating and negotiating with the government again. The government has not been considering the requests of the Zapatistas, mostly because of former president Ernesto Zedillo and his wet dream of improving Mexico's economy by bringing big business into the country and throwing indigenous people out. "[He] wants to turn Mexico into a shopping mall," Zack de la Rocha, frontman of Rage Against The Machine, once said.

On Saturday, December 2nd, Mexico's first opposition president in 71 years, Vicente Fox, was inaugurated into office. Shortly after his inauguration, President Fox began withdrawing hundreds of soldiers and military personnel from some of the more tense areas in Chiapas. Military officials confirmed that 53 road-blocks out of 600 have also been removed around Chiapas. With the new President Fox in office, it seems as though things will begin to turn around in Mexico and the government is going to start working with the Zapatistas.

Subcomandante Marcos, the EZLN spokesman, has not yet made any public comments toward President

Fox, but clearly looks forward to Fox's promise to introduce the Indian Rights Bill to the legislature. Marcos also said that in February he might travel to Mexico City to meet with president Fox and lobby for the Indian rights bill. Hopefully, President Fox will stick to what he said in his inaugural speech: "Today a new dawn begins for Chiapas." ★



A SIGN ON THE EDGE OF ZAPATISTA
TERRITORY IN CHAIIPAS, MEXICO.